

Attachment 2

Rural Development District

Density criteria for a variety of densities in rural areas

Lands outside of the rural areas of more intense development defined above shall be Rural Development District Zoning designations in the RDD shall include a range in land use densities of one unit per five acres to one-unit-per-20-acres for overall new residential development. In rural lands existing lots of record, regardless of size, shall be legal lots for uses as set forth in development regulations. Existing lots of record are defined at LCC 16.02.050. Many of the large parcels in Lewis County consist of a wide variety of different soil types and potential uses, including various mixtures of timber lands, agricultural lands, and lands which are not particularly productive for either, but which have been and can be used for other rural development. "Rural character" in Lewis County can best be protected through the use of clustering, where limited number of parcels are placed in those areas most suitable for development, leaving large tracts of properties available for large lot uses. Development regulations shall provide mechanisms for encouraging clustered development and to protect large parcels from unnecessary division. Development regulations shall also identify allowed uses, including resource uses and accessory uses, but should limit large-scale commercial, industrial, or non-residential activities not related to resource uses. Rural Development District areas may include areas identified by cities as potential urban reserve for non-residential uses. The County development regulations may provide a very low density for such areas to preserve future municipal choices.

The first zone identified for use in the rural areas was a rural 1 unit to 20 acres designation. The lands so zoned are in areas known to have potentially significant limitations due to soils, steep slopes, lack of access, or local water availability issues. Uses in the R 1-20 zone may be limited in size and scale, including intensity, in many areas. Some uses, including those which benefit from the remote or less developed lands, e.g. camps, recreation uses, and rifle ranges, would be expected to locate in the zone precisely due to the lack of development. Development regulations shall provide that adequate facilities, critical area protection, and protection of resource lands and resource uses be built into any project review for lands in this zone.

The second zone identified for use in the rural areas was 1 unit per 10 acres. The district permits a limited degree of rural area development at truly rural levels of intensity. Uses in the R 1-10 zone reflect normal state of rural activities, including residential use, home occupations, and isolated small businesses, and a variety of smaller business activities permitted and limited as set forth in the land use plan. The focus is to assure that the permitted activities are consistent with the historic practices and intensities and suited to meet the needs of those who choose to live and work in rural areas, are compatible with overall rural character, and residents recognize limitations on the availability of rural area services and avoid the need for urban levels of service that cannot and will not be provided outside UGAs, except to meet recognized health emergency situation as authorized by law.

The third zone identified for use in the rural areas is residential one unit per five acres. This zone is located in areas that show a pattern of large lot residential development, and are typically near population centers such as the UGAs and the small towns. The residential unit 1-5 zone permits residential uses and a variety of uses, including home occupations, isolated small businesses, and additional uses commonly found in rural areas. Some activities have been limited due to the projected intensity of development or proximity to more developed areas. Size and scale, including intensity, limits were in concert with historic practices.

Lots of record less than five acres are considered legal lots for development purposes in all rural zones if they meet the requirements of the County regulations for "lots of record." LCC 16.02.050.

Designation criteria for a variety of densities in rural areas

In establishing a variety of densities and uses in rural Lewis County, the county should consider a number of criteria reflecting rural character in Lewis County.

1. The first consideration is to let the land speak for itself. Thus, matters such as critical areas and constraints on water and septic shall be considered.
2. A second consideration is self-designation. That is, land which is by the owner's action included in forest open space tax designations, agriculture open space tax designation, or open space open space tax designation, as evidence of an intent to retain lands in larger tracts. Under state laws, 20-acre parcels and larger are the predominant pattern for such tax designated lands.
3. A third consideration is the pattern of development as evidenced by a number of factors:
 - a. Development patterns evidenced by parcel size and availability of rural facilities and services.
 - b. Population density evidencing cost and efficiency of providing public services.
 - c. Assessed value as evidence of availability of rural facilities and pressure for infill.
 - d. Likelihood of conflict or change due to development patterns or conflicts, including protection of resource uses and the ability of cities to manage long-term growth boundaries.
4. Future land use maps should be based on designations in larger blocks, reflecting logical boundaries and not individual parcels.
5. The future land use plan should minimize isolated islands.
6. No one factor is determinative of the future land use pattern, but land capability, self designation, and proximity to rural facilities shall be given substantial weight.